

County of Milwaukee
Interoffice Communication

DATE: November 13, 2019

TO: Theodore Lipscomb, Sr., Chairman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

FROM: Donna Brown-Martin, Director, Department of Transportation

SUBJECT: Bus Rapid Transit at the Milwaukee Regional Medical Center (MRMC)

BACKGROUND

In July 2019, the Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS) provided an update to the Transportation, Public Works and Transit Committee on the status of the East-West Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project, File Number 19-601. The project continues to make significant progress following determinations and guidance by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Currently, the project is at the 90% design phase and is being reviewed by the FTA's Project Management Oversight Consultant (PMOC). The PMOC evaluates the project specific to administration, project costs, timeline and coordination requirements with the various stakeholders engaged with the project.

The Milwaukee Regional Medical Center (MRMC) is one such important stakeholder in this project since the BRT route will traverse through the campus. MRMC has recognized the importance of BRT service as a critical transportation link between campus institutions and their respective patients and employees.

Per File Number 18-484, presented by the Department of Administrative Services to the Finance and Audit Committee, Milwaukee County and the MRMC member organizations have reached initial agreements on the purchase of land currently leased and occupied by the organizations on the MRMC campus. Once the purchase is finalized, MRMC organizations will assume all of the liabilities and costs of ownership, which means the County will no longer be responsible for the cost of infrastructure improvements, maintenance and operations of the campus. The agreements have incorporated Transit Provisions that will preserve the right of Milwaukee County to continue to operate transit through the MRMC Campus, at no additional cost to the County for easement or other right-of-way permissions.

Under the terms of the land purchase option, the amount of \$4,511,062.50 will either be credited against the purchase price or paid in escrow at closing. Upon Milwaukee County's receipt of the FTA grant to fund the BRT project, the credited or escrowed funds will be utilized to pay for the appropriate widening of a north/south access route on campus to accommodate dedicated BRT service lanes between Wisconsin Avenue and Watertown Plank Road. The funds will also pay for the cost of moving and/or replacing underground utilities, engineering and construction management services. All of such work shall comply with the contracting requirements of the FTA grant.

While MCTS will be responsible for the maintenance of the BRT stations located on the campus, MRMC is committed that right-of-way will remain available for BRT service and use for the duration of BRT operations.

Pending final design completion, issuance of the grant agreement by FTA tentatively expected in 2020 and authorization to proceed by the County Board, construction activities could begin in the first half of 2020. As directed in the County's 2019 Adopted Budget, MCTS is also introducing Battery Electric Buses (BEB) to service this alignment and is working to incorporate the necessary infrastructure requirements and vehicle specifications to the project. If a grant agreement and funding align with the construction season, MCTS could begin BRT revenue service as soon as the second half of 2021.

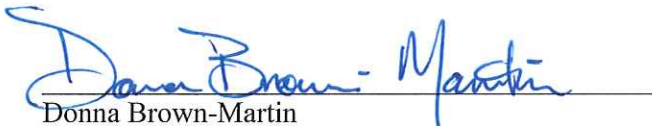
Ongoing updates on the BRT project, are available on the project website: <http://www.eastwestbrt.com/>.

RECOMMENDATION

This report is for informational purposes unless otherwise directed.

Prepared by:
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Approved by:



Donna Brown-Martin
Director, Department of Transportation

cc: Chris Abele, County Executive
Raisa Koltun, Chief of Staff, County Executive
Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, County Board of Supervisors